

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A system for providing services, comprising:

a service activation component offering an extensible set of services; and

a gateway, connected to the service activation component, and configured to provide access control to the services offered by the service activation component.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein the service activation component is configured to configure a router to deliver a service.

3. The system of claim 1, wherein the gateway is configured to:

receive a message requesting one of the services, and

perform access control with regard to the message.

4. The system of claim 3, wherein the message includes a service name and an argument; and

wherein when performing access control with regard to the message, the gateway is configured to:

determine whether a requestor is permitted to request a service corresponding to the service name, and

determine whether the argument is permitted for the requestor and the service corresponding to the service name.

5. The system of claim 4, wherein the gateway is further configured to reject the message unless the determinations are successful.

6. The system of claim 4, wherein the gateway is further configured to determine whether the argument is valid.

7. The system of claim 1, wherein the access control includes at least two forms of access control.

8. The system of claim 1, wherein the service activation component provides the services to a customer associated with a business partner system, the business partner system generates a message requesting a particular one of the services to obtain the particular service for the customer; and

wherein the gateway is further configured to:

receive the message from the business partner system, and

authenticate the business partner system based, at least in part, on information included in the message.

9. The system of claim 1, wherein the service activation component includes a plurality of service activation components; and

wherein the system further comprises:

a SAE locator configured to obtain information associated with the service activation components; and

wherein the gateway is further configured to:

receive a message requesting one of the services, and

contact the SAE locator to identify one of the service activation components on which to activate the requested service.

10. The system of claim 9, wherein the message includes a subscriber identifier that identifies a subscriber on whose behalf the requested service is being requested; and

wherein the SAE locator is configured to map the subscriber identifier to one of the service activation components.

11. The system of claim 1, further comprising:

an extension manager configured to facilitate at least one of modification of services in the extensible set of services and addition of new services to the extensible set of services offered by the service activation component.

12. The system of claim 1, wherein the services include network services associated with communication on the Internet.

13. A system for providing access to network services, comprising:

means for providing an extensible set of network services;

means for receiving, from retailers, requests for ones of the network services; and

means for providing subsets of a common interface to different ones of the retailers using access control, the retailers accessing the extensible set of network services via the subsets of the common interface.

14. A method for providing services, comprising:
providing an extensible set of services;
receiving a message requesting one of the services;
performing access control with regard to the message; and
selectively providing the requested service based, at least in part, on a result of the access control.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the message includes a service name corresponding to a desired service and an argument; and
wherein the performing access control includes:
determining whether a business partner is permitted to request the service corresponding to the service name, and
determining whether the argument is permitted for the business partner and the service corresponding to the service name.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein the performing access control further includes rejecting the message unless the determinations are successful.

17. The method of claim 15, wherein the performing access control further includes determining whether the argument is valid.

18. The method of claim 14, wherein the selectively providing the selected service includes configuring a router to deliver the requested service to a subscriber.

19. The method of claim 14, wherein the access control includes at least two forms of access control.

20. The method of claim 14, further comprising:
authenticating a business partner system that transmitted the message based, at least in part, on information included in the message.

21. The method of claim 14, wherein the message includes a subscriber identifier that identifies a subscriber on whose behalf the requested service is being requested; and
wherein the method further comprises determining a network component on which to activate the requested service based, at least in part, on the subscriber identifier included in the message.

22. The method of claim 14, wherein the services include network services associated with communication on the Internet.

23. A service gateway in communication with a first entity and a second entity, comprising:

- a first interface module configured to receive, from the first entity, a message requesting performance of a service by the second entity, the message including a service name and an argument corresponding to the service;
- an access control module configured to:
 - determine whether the first entity is permitted to request performance of the service corresponding to the service name,
 - determine whether the argument is permissible for an identity of the first entity,
 - and
 - determine whether the argument is permissible for the service corresponding to the service name; and
- a second interface module configured to selectively request performance of the service on the second entity based, at least in part, on results of the determinations of the access control module.

24. The service gateway of claim 23, wherein the access control module is further configured to reject the message unless all of the determinations are successful.

25. A network wholesaler system connected to a plurality of retailer systems associated with a corresponding plurality of retailers, each of the retailers selling services, of an

extensible set of services provided by the wholesaler system, to its customers, the wholesaler system providing a common interface via which the retailer systems request one or more services from the extensible set of services, the wholesaler system exposing subsets of the common interface to each of the retailer systems by controlling access to the extensible set of services by the retailer systems.

26. A wholesaler system that provides services to subscribers associated with a plurality of retailer systems, the wholesaler system comprising:

- a service activation component configured to provide the services to the subscribers; and
- a service gateway configured to act as a single point of contact between the retailer systems and the service activation component, the service gateway providing controlled access, by the retailer systems, to the services provided by the service activation component, the service gateway permitting each of the retailer systems access to a subset of the services provided by the service activation component via the controlled access.

27. The wholesaler system of claim 26, wherein the services provided by the service activation component include network services.

28. The wholesaler system of claim 26, wherein the services provided by the service activation component include an extensible set of services.

29. The wholesaler system of claim 26, wherein the service gateway and the service

activation component in combination provide a common interface via which the retailer systems request one or more of the services provided by the service activation component, the combination exposing subsets of the common interface to each of the retailer systems by controlling access to the services by the retailer systems.

30. The wholesaler system of claim 26, wherein the service gateway includes:

- a first interface module configured to receive a message requesting performance of one of the services by the service activation component,
- an access control module configured to provide access control with regard to the message,
- and
- a second interface module configured to selectively interact with the service activation component based, at least in part, on an output of the access control module.

31. A method performed by a service gateway in communication with a first entity and a second entity, the method comprising:

- receiving, from the first entity, a message requesting performance of a network service by the second entity, the message including a service name and an argument corresponding to the network service;
- generating a first result based on a determination of whether the first entity is permitted to request performance of the network service corresponding to the service name;
- generating a second result based on a determination of whether the first entity is permitted to provide the argument;

generating a third result based on a determination of whether the argument is permissible for the network service corresponding to the service name; and

selectively invoking performance of the network service on the second entity based, at least in part, on the first, second, and third results.

32. A service provider system connected to a plurality of business partner systems associated with a corresponding plurality of business partners, each of the business partners selling services, of an extensible set of services provided by the service provider system, to its customers, the service provider system providing a common interface via which the business partner systems request one or more services from the extensible set of services, the service provider system exposing subsets of the common interface to each of the business partner systems by controlling access to the extensible set of services by the business partner systems.